

STATE OF MONTANA  
**OFFICE OF THE STATE PUBLIC DEFENDER**

**MEASURABLE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**  
for Presentation to the Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Judicial Branch, Law Enforcement, and Justice

1. Commission meetings – the Montana Public Defender Commission shall meet at least four times per year to review the operations of the Office of the State Public Defender (OPD).
2. OPD shall track the outcome of cases.
3. OPD shall track the length of time between case opening and closing.
4. OPD shall report on the average cost per case type.
5. OPD shall perform performance evaluations on staff attorneys.
6. OPD shall perform proficiency determinations on contract counsel.
7. OPD shall require not less than 25 CLE credits per attorney.
8. OPD management shall monitor attorney caseloads to assure that if they exceed 150 units the attorney is spending adequate time on clients' cases.

STATE OF MONTANA  
**OFFICE OF THE STATE PUBLIC DEFENDER**  
**STRATEGIC PLAN**

**GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTION ITEMS**

GOAL 1: Maintain and improve a statewide public defender system to provide effective assistance of counsel to indigent criminal defendants and other persons in civil cases who are entitled by law to assistance of counsel at public expense.

GOAL 2: Ensure that the system is free from undue political interference and conflicts of interest.

GOAL 3: Monitor that the public defender services are delivered by qualified and competent counsel in a manner that is fair and consistent throughout the state.

GOAL 4: Assure that the system utilizes state employees, contracted services, or other methods of providing services in a manner that is responsive to and respective of regional and community needs and interests.

GOAL 5: Advocate for adequate funding of the statewide public defender system.

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GOAL 1: Maintain and improve a statewide public defender system to provide effective assistance of counsel to indigent criminal defendants and other persons in civil cases who are entitled by law to assistance of counsel at public expense.

OBJECTIVE: Monitor the existing public defender system to assure that it provides high quality services at a reasonable cost.

ACTION ITEM: Periodically adjust the balance of state employees and contract services to achieve the best result.

ACTION ITEM: Periodically update the agency's plan for providing public defender services for presentation to the Montana Public Defender Commission and other interested parties.

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GOAL 2: Ensure that the system is free from undue political interference and conflicts of interest.

OBJECTIVE: Assist the criminal justice system to treat people without bias and to provide fair treatment to all.

ACTION ITEM: Monitor the agency's uniform procedure for identifying conflicts of interest.

ACTION ITEM: Identify attorneys who are available to handle conflict cases.

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GOAL 3: Monitor that public defender services are delivered by qualified and competent counsel in a manner that is fair and consistent throughout the state.

OBJECTIVE: Staff and support the agency's training function.

ACTION ITEM: The training coordinator, in consultation with the Chief Public Defender and the Public Defender Commission, will design annual training programs that best achieve the goals of the agency.

ACTION ITEM: The training coordinator will provide training to all members of the system including state employees and contract service providers.

ACTION ITEM: The training coordinator will provide training for attorneys representing those with physical or mental disabilities.

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GOAL 4: Assure that the system utilizes state employees, contracted services, or other methods of providing services in a manner that is responsive to and respective of regional and community needs and interests.

OBJECTIVE: Assure that the main focus of the Office of the State Public Defender is to provide the best client service. Assure that service is being provided by monitoring the performance of state employees and contracts with private attorneys.

ACTION ITEM: Continually identify attorneys willing to contract for public defender services.

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GOAL 5: Advocate for adequate funding of the statewide public defender system.

OBJECTIVE: The agency will communicate to the Montana Public Defender Commission, all branches of state government, and other interested parties information related to the caseloads and costs of the public defender system.

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STATE OF MONTANA  
**OFFICE OF THE STATE PUBLIC DEFENDER**  
**STRATEGIC PLAN**

**GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTION ITEMS**

GOAL 1: Maintain and improve a statewide appellate defender system to provide effective assistance of counsel to indigent criminal defendants and other persons in civil cases who are entitled by law to appeals at public expense.

GOAL 2: Ensure that the system is free from undue political interference and conflicts of interest.

GOAL 3: Monitor that appellate defender services are delivered by qualified and competent counsel.

GOAL 4: Assure that the system utilizes state employees and contracted services to avoid conflicts of interest and to process appeals in a timely manner.

GOAL 5: Advocate for adequate funding of the statewide appellate defender system.

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GOAL 1: Maintain and improve a statewide appellate defender system to provide effective assistance of counsel to indigent criminal defendants and other persons in civil cases who are entitled by law to appeals at public expense.

OBJECTIVE: Monitor the existing appellate defender office to assure that it provides high quality services at a reasonable cost.

ACTION ITEM: Periodically adjust the balance of state employees and contract services to achieve the best result.

ACTION ITEM: Periodically update the agency's plan for providing appellate services for presentation to the Montana Public Defender Commission and other interested parties.

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GOAL 2: Ensure that the system is free from undue political interference and conflicts of interest.

OBJECTIVE: Assist the criminal justice system to treat people without bias and to provide fair treatment to all.

ACTION ITEM: Monitor the agency's uniform procedure for identifying conflicts of interest.

ACTION ITEM: Identify attorneys who are available to handle post-conviction relief petitions.

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GOAL 3: Monitor that appellate defender services are delivered by qualified and competent counsel.

OBJECTIVE: Staff and support the agency's training function.

ACTION ITEM: The training coordinator, in consultation with the Chief Public Defender and the Public Defender Commission, will design annual training programs that best achieve the goals of the agency, including goals of the appellate office.

ACTION ITEM: Provide for out-of-state specialized appellate training for one appellate attorney each year.

ACTION ITEM: The training coordinator will include appellate attorneys in trainings to further the understanding of appellate issues for all public defenders.

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GOAL 4: Assure that the system utilizes state employees and contracted services to avoid conflicts of interest and to process appeals in a timely manner.

OBJECTIVE: Assure that the main focus of the Appellate Office of the Office of the State Public Defender is to provide the best appellate service. Assure that service is being provided by monitoring the performance of appellate attorneys.

ACTION ITEM: Continually identify attorneys willing to contract for appellate services.

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GOAL 5: Advocate for adequate funding of the statewide appellate defender system.

OBJECTIVE: The agency will communicate to the Montana Public Defender Commission, all branches of state government, and other interested parties information related to the caseloads and costs of the appellate defender system.

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